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"Senior Administrator at UD to Take on New Leadership Role at Chaminade University of Honolulu" (2000). *News Releases*. 9367.
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Aug. 7, 2000
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NEWS RELEASE

SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR AT UD TO TAKE ON NEW LEADERSHIP ROLE AT CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY OF HONOLULU

DAYTON, Ohio — By rough estimates, Brother Bernard J. Ploeger, S.M., has jetted to Hawaii 20 times during the past five years.

It's not exactly been a day on the beach. In a volunteer role as adviser to the president of Chaminade University of Honolulu and a member of the university's board of regents, he's helped the Marianist campus turn around an enrollment decline, maintain accreditation and become financially stable.

Today, he's been named Chaminade University's executive vice president and provost, a position he will assume on Feb. 1. For the past 14 years, he's served as senior vice president for administration at the University of Dayton.

"Chaminade is in a building phase. He has both a depth and breadth of experience in higher education and will be a rich resource to Chaminade," said Sue Wesselkamper, president. "He'll help us refocus on our Marianist mission of education."

Known for his strong analytical abilities, Ploeger supervises finance, facilities, computing and telecommunications, human resources, institutional studies and legal affairs at UD. "I'm sad that I will be losing an excellent colleague and partner, but I'm happy that in his new position Brother Bernie will have the opportunity to demonstrate the many ways he is a first-rate educator," said Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., UD president. "He is a very good person. I'm privileged to count him as a friend. He has constantly challenged me to grow as a leader, and he is an excellent team player. He will be greatly missed by all of us."

Founded in 1955, Chaminade has a \$19 million annual budget and enrolls approximately 950 full-time undergraduate students, 1,200 part-time evening undergraduate students at military bases throughout the Hawaiian islands and 700 part-time graduate students. It's an ethnically and culturally diverse campus that draws students primarily from Hawaii, nearby territories and the West Coast. Along with UD and St. Mary's University in San Antonio, it's one of three Marianist universities in the country.

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When Wesselkamper became president in 1995, full-time undergraduate enrollment hovered around 600. The former Oakwood resident asked Fitz for UD's help in turning around the decline. Ploeger and Chris Muñoz, associate provost for enrollment management, worked with Chaminade administrators to more than double the size of the first-year class and boost retention. Net assets grew by \$7 million, and the endowment has doubled to \$4 million.

"That's been phenomenal growth. Chaminade is on a strong growth curve," Ploeger said. "In the next five to seven years, a significant number of faculty members will be hired because Chaminade is expanding. I will have the responsibility of looking at ways to strengthen the curriculum and build the faculty. Faculty shape universities. I look at hiring faculty as the most challenging, most exciting part of this new position."

As executive vice president and provost, Ploeger will supervise academic affairs, enrollment services and finance and operations. Over the next two years, he'll be involved in developing an institutional self-study in preparation for an accrediting agency visit, helping faculty revise the core curriculum and develop an academic plan, and crafting a facilities plan to support a projected full-time undergraduate enrollment of 1,500.

Ploeger, 52, has served the University of Dayton for two decades. After receiving a bachelor of science degree in mathematics from UD in 1971 and a doctorate from Ohio State University, he taught in UD's mathematics department. He also worked as an associate research scientist in UD's Strategies for Responsible Development office, where he traveled to the Republic of Niger to assist in an agricultural development project. Since 1986, he's been UD's senior vice president for administration.

"I've been especially appreciative of being able to work with Brother Ray. It's been a very fruitful collaboration," Ploeger said. "In all senses, UD has matured as an institution. Fifteen years ago UD would have been on the list of the 10 largest Catholic universities in the country, but I'm not sure if you would have considered it one of the 10 best Catholic universities. Now I think it would be reasonable to assert both things. Those are the two areas that have been most important to me."

Others might point to the bold expansion of campus facilities as Ploeger's mark. He oversaw the development of a long-range environmental design plan that has guided \$140 million of new construction and renovations. In addition, UD completely wired the campus and built the Lawnview Apartments, added a wing to the Virginia W. Kettering Residence Hall and purchased and renovated 225 houses in the south and north campus neighborhoods — in all, adding almost 2,000 beds to UD's housing system.

"The capital projects have exceeded anything I thought would be possible," he said.

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For media interviews, contact **Brother Bernard J. Ploeger, S.M.**, at (937) 229-4333 or **Sue Wesselkamper** at (808) 735-4741.